

AARP Comment for March 18, 2026 PDAB meeting

March 17, 2026

Dear Chair Lindeblad and Members of the Prescription Drug Affordability Board (PDAB):

On behalf of AARP Washington and our more than 870,000 members, thank you for the opportunity to comment as you evaluate the 2026 Eligible Prescription Drug List and begin the affordability review.

AARP Washington has long championed policies that protect older adults from unaffordable prescription drug prices. We were proud to support and advocate for the passage of SB 5532 in 2022 creating PDAB.

Washington's older adults continue to face significant challenges due to high prescription drug costs. According to an AARP's Vital Voices, a Dec. 2025 statewide survey of 1,380 residents, nearly half (48%) are worried about affording prescription drugs, and 26% reported rationing medications because of cost.

Medication rationing is especially acute among individuals with low incomes, disabilities, or those receiving VA health care, where rationing reaches 34–48%. This creates downstream health and financial burdens for individuals, families, and the state's health care system. AARP's policy guidance is clear 96% of adults age 50+ say the government must do more to lower prescription drug prices.

AARP also championed the 2022 federal prescription drug law, which institutes a \$2,000 cap on annual out-of-pocket costs for Medicare Part D enrollees beginning in 2025, saving approximately 42,000 Washington seniors an average of \$1,500 in the first year.

However, state-level action through the PDAB remains essential to address affordability gaps for all Washingtonians not only those on Medicare.

AARP Washington urges PDAB to:

1. Prioritize high-cost, high-use drugs affecting older adults (e.g., medications for cancer, autoimmune disease, cardiovascular disease, diabetes).
2. Weight patient out-of-pocket costs heavily in your prioritization methodology.
3. Maintain accessible ways patients and caregivers can share input with the PDAB.
4. Use the Board's authority to implement Upper Payment Limits (UPLs) when a drug is determined to be unaffordable.

AARP Washington applauds the Board's commitment to making prescription drugs more affordable. We remain committed to supporting your work to ensure Washingtonians, especially older adults, can access the medications they need without financial hardship.

Thank you for your leadership and for the opportunity to provide comment.

Sincerely,

March 2026

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